



#### IMPROVING OUR PRODUCT

*While reducing costs is important, it is only part of the challenge at VIA. It goes hand in hand with efforts to increase revenues by continually improving our product and enhancing the quality of our service and getting more people on our trains.*

# The

## VIA is ready to move into a new era for passenger rail.

VIA is preparing to take Canada's passenger rail service into the next century. In response to the Standing Committee on Transport's recommendations for the revitalization of passenger rail, we are working with the government to develop a long-term strategic plan for the future. This plan should be in place by the end of 1999.

It is likely to change, fundamentally, the way passenger rail is funded and delivered in Canada. The Minister of Transport has indicated that the government is ready to explore new, innovative ideas such as different ways to partner with the private sector in order to ensure that passenger rail will grow and prosper to meet the needs of Canadians.

These are exciting times for VIA. We are eager to do all we can to move passenger rail forward.

In the meantime, we will concentrate on the strategy that has already transformed the corporation into a viable, commercially focused organization managing the fundamentals of passenger rail as a business. In 1999, this means building on what we have accomplished, and taking advantage of new business opportunities.



Julie Durocher

We will introduce new frequencies between Ottawa and Montreal early in the new year, offering same-day return passengers more options and introducing *AirConnect* service to make it simpler than ever for Ottawa-area travellers to transfer to international flights at Dorval International Airport via a simple train-airport shuttle connection.

We have already begun exploring options for providing direct service links into the airport terminal. We believe there is a real opportunity for business growth by providing such intermodal connections and that passenger rail could serve as the catalyst for a truly national, intermodal passenger transportation network.

We will be working closely with Canadian National to build a new, mutually beneficial partnership that will ensure VIA's access to CN tracks for additional trains and help us achieve the consistent on-time performance our customers demand.

In all of our activities, we will continue to seek new ways to run our business better, to improve safety, to enhance service, to reduce costs, and to maximize revenues in all of our operations. Because we know that whatever the future holds, it holds a place for a dynamic, expertly managed passenger rail service – the passenger rail service VIA Rail is determined to provide for Canadians.

# Future